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## Gobbledygook

*The incidence of federalese in the nation's official pronouncements is high.*

A Pennsylvania newspaper notes that a brave bureaucrat in Washington, D. C., has undertaken what must be a formidable task: He is going to try to find out why his colleagues can't write a lucid sentence.

A great number of orders and statements issued by various agency personnel are never read because they cannot be understood. Gobbledygook, federalese, bafflegab, whatever you call it, bureaucratic correspondence is noted for its turgidity.

Government is not the only field susceptible to the scrambled syntax and witless word formations, but inasmuch as things get easily confused in the District of Columbia, a common, understandable language should be obligatory.

It's not English that's at fault. It is the overriding attitude that things must be made to sound important and weighty and that polysyllabic words indicate scholarship of some sort.

The man who is undertaking the study of federalese is Lawrence Klein, editor of the Labor Department's Monthly Review. The Pentagon is always a rich mine for anyone prospecting for bafflegab. Mr. Klein cites this example:

"In the current stages of ongoing post-attack productivity study, the identification of the enervating effects of a decreased caloric diet upon physical productivity indicates the need to plan preattack for adequate caloric food stockpiles."

Apparently what that said is that somebody had better make sure the soldiers have something to eat after a battle.

A conservationist, to cite another example, refers to pleasant living conditions as "a group of physical environmental conditions which we will refer to as amenity resources."

Perhaps Mr. Klein's task would be more fruitful if he just located the malefactors of written nonsense and had them transferred to the Central Intelligence Agency. With their natural jabberwocky, who needs codes?

CPYRGHT